

Enactus Project Needs Assessment

One crucial aspect of the project planning process is a needs assessment. By meeting with the people you want to empower with your Enactus project, your team will obtain a better understanding of the economic, social and environmental factors at play in their livelihoods. This understanding leads to sustainable, successful projects that more effectively improve livelihoods. Additionally, conducting the needs assessment in cooperation with the people you will be working with empowers those individuals by giving them a voice and a stake in their own outcome. Your team develops their capacity to see opportunities to transform their own lives and the lives of others.

The basic steps involved in conducting a needs assessment are as follows:

- Determine the people you want to empower with your project
- Develop a plan for assessing the needs and desired outcomes of those individuals
- Conduct the assessment in conjunction with the people your project will empower
- Analyze the results

It is important to include key individuals in the needs assessment project. These key individuals will vary from project to project and from community to community, but some examples include: those experiencing the needs your project addresses, community leaders and activists, people whose jobs or lives could be affected by the project, businesses involved in the project, health and human service providers who may be knowledgeable about the community.

Project Title:

Start Date:

Projected End Date:

Person or people you are working with:

People involved in filling out the needs assessment:

Economic, Social and Environmental Factors

Consider the economic factors affecting the people you are working with:

- What sort of economic trends are occurring? Consider seasonality of prices, production and employment opportunities.
- What are the industries or major sources of employment in the area?
- What is the average income of the people you are working with? How does this compare to others in the area?
- What is the unemployment rate of the target audience? What is the major cause of this unemployment?
- What other economic factors are applicable?

Unemployment

Seasonal Employment

Poverty

Lack of job opportunities

Poor business growth

Other (Specify below)

Notes:

Consider the social factors affecting the people you are working with:

- What are the demographics of the community? Example: gender, age, life expectancy, etc.
- What are the population trends affecting the community (birth rates, family-size, etc.)?
- Do the people you are working with have access to affordable education?
- What health-related issues and trends are present in the community?
- What role does the government play in the lives of the community?
- Is there a history of conflict or discrimination in the community?
- What cultural norms and practices are present in the community?
- What other groups or organizations are doing development work within the community?
- What other social factors are applicable to your beneficiary community?

Population growth

Health-related issues

Social isolation

Discrimination

Education

Other (Specify below)

Notes:

Consider the environmental factors affecting the people you are working with:

- Describe the physical location of the community – What are the climate and topography like?
- What sort of disease, pollution or natural disasters affect or might affect the community?
- Describe the infrastructure available to the community.
- What sort of industrial facilities and commercial areas are present?
- What other environmental factors are applicable to your beneficiary community?

Climate change

Pollution

Waste management issues

Other (Specify below)

Notes:

Livelihoods Assets & Strategies

The goal of livelihood development is to increase access to and/or protection of financial, social, natural, physical, and human livelihood assets. The assets are relational, and often developing one means development of others. It is also necessary to look beyond the categories into the structures, processes and strategies that transform the assets into livelihood outcomes. The purpose of the section below is to identify what assets the people you are working with have currently, and how they are using them (or not using them) to achieve their desired livelihood outcomes.

Livelihoods Assets

1. What financial assets do the people you are working with have currently? How stable are these assets?

2. What social assets do the people you are working with have currently? How stable are these assets?

3. What natural assets do the people you are working with have currently? How stable are these assets?

4. What physical assets do the people you are working with have currently? How stable are these assets?

5. What human assets do the people you are working with have currently? How stable are these assets?

6. What are the desired livelihoods outcomes of the people you are working with? Which outcome(s) will be the focus of your project?

7. What strategies are being used by the community currently to achieve these outcomes? What is and isn't working?



8. Given the economic, social and environmental factors and livelihood assets of the people you are working with, what are potential internal or external challenges for your Enactus project? Are there possible negative consequences?

